

MARINE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COMMITTEE

by

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1985



THÜNEN

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Belgium

(W. Vyncke)

- The new oceanographic vessel "Belgica" was commissioned in 1984. The thus increased possibilities of research at sea are mirrored by the considerably expanded number of missions in 1985.
- 1. The effects of dumping industrial wastes off the Belgian coast on the fish and shrimp stocks and invertebrates were studied further.
A biological and physico-chemical survey was carried out every three months.
- 2. The biological and physico-chemical monitoring of the Kwinte Bank, Buiten Ratel, Oostdyckbank where sand extractions are taking place was continued.
- 3. The monitoring programmes on heavy metals and PCBs in fish and shellfish were continued. Samples of cod, flounder, brown shrimps and mussels from the Southern North Sea were analyzed (JMJ area 1).
- 4. The radioactivity of sediments and samples of fish and shellfish from Belgian coastal waters and from the Irish Sea was measured.
- 5. Studies on fish pathology were continued in Belgian coastal waters, especially in dumping areas.
- 6. Continuous survey of the water quality in the Belgian zone of the continental shelf and in the Western Scheldt estuary, with respect to the national obligations towards the Oslo and Paris Conventions and the EEC Directives. Parameters measured refer to hydrography, nitrogen nutrients, chlorophyll and pollutants. The survey grid comprises 30 sampling stations.

7. Study of geomorphological characteristics of the sediments with development of several techniques.
- Study of residual movements of sediment and changes of superficial sediments topography in relation with sand mining.
- Detailed study of Holocene deposits off the Belgian coast.
- Quaternary and tertiary sediments in the Southern Bight (cartography, stratigraphy, structure).
8. Monitoring of benthic populations (coastal and sand banks) in relation with sand mining and/or COST 47 programme.
- Study of the relation between interstitial benthic fauna and sediment characteristics.
9. Study of air-sea interactions and characterization of aerosols.
10. Study of the dynamics of phosphates in estuarine and sea environments.
- Study of the dynamics of phosphorus in recent estuarine and sea sediments.
11. Study of the ecology and the biogeochemistry of marine systems. Study of frontal structures.
12. Study of the influence of terrigenous inputs of nutrients on primary production. Simultaneous study of metal inputs.
13. Study of the flux of heavy metals to and from the sediments as well as horizontal transport of metals.
14. Study of the kinetics of uptake of nitrogen by phytoplankton.

Canada

No report received